

Message Text

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53

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 OMB-01 IO-13 RSR-01 /119 W

----- 083595

R 141340Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4652

INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 1663

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MT, IS

SUBJ: ISRAELI PROTEST TO MINTOFF

REF: VALLETTA 1424

1. ISRAELI AMBASSADOR HAS CONFIRMED TO US RUMORS AROUND TOWN THAT ISRAEL HAS FORMALLY PROTESTED TO MINTOFF HIS UNBALANCED AND PERJORATIVE REMARKS ABOUT ISRAEL AND ISRAELIS IN FOREIGN POLICY DEBATE JULY 11.

2. BENYACOV TOLD US THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM AT FIRST TENDED TO DOWNPLAY HIS REPORT ON MINTOFF'S REMARKS. SECOND THOUGHTS, HOWEVER, RESULTED IN INSTRUCTION TO BENYACOV TO DELIVER NOTE TO PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE EXPRESSING CONSTERNATION OVER REMARKS AND ASKING CLARIFICATION. BENYACOV SAID HE HAD GREAT DIFFICULTY ARRANGING AN APPOINTMENT WITH MINTOFF'S PRIVATE SECRETARY CAMILLERI (WITH WHOM HE NORMALLY HAS VERY GOOD PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP). WHEN BENYACOV PRESENTED NOTE, CAMILLERI'S REACTION WAS BLUSTER AND ACCUSATION MINTOFF BEING QUOTED OUT OF CONTEXT. BENYACOV SAID HE WAS FIRM IN REJECTING CAMILLERI'S ASSERTIONS.

3. NOTE WAS DELIVERED JULY 27, SHORTLY BEFORE MINTOFF AND
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CAMILLERI DEPARTED FOR COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING

IN OTTAWA. BENYACOV SAID HE DID NOT EXPECT EARLY ANSWER.

4. COMMENT: IF MINTOFF INDEED MAKES REPLY, HE WILL FIND IT MUCH EASIER TO JUSTIFY HIS REMARKS IN LIGHT OF ISRAELI INTERCEPTION OF MEA AIRLINER AT BEIRUT. AS WE HAVE REPORTED, MINTOFF HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY UNBALANCED IN FACT ON ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUES WHILE STILL PROFESSING NEUTRAL POSITION. HE WILL NOW UNDOUBTEDLY FEEL JUSTIFIED IN HAVING CHARACTERIZED DAYAN AS "MADMAN" IN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE.
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